



**“RENEWING *the* PROMISE *of* SYRACUSE”**

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**A 50 Point Plan for a 21<sup>st</sup> Century City**

# *the* PLAN

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**As Mayor, I will strive to improve the quality of life in the City of Syracuse by developing and implementing progressive policies steeped in innovation, transparency, community engagement, and a zeal for bold, equitable leadership that provides 21st Century responses to Syracuse's 21st Century challenges and opportunities.**

My 50 Point Plan will cover six major policy areas: Economic Development and Job Creation, Education and Youth, Public Safety, Sustainability and the Environment, Community Development, Housing, and Neighborhoods, and Government Modernization and Efficiency. Within each of these six areas I will outline broad goals and the specific strategies which collectively will create a critical mass of public action. This outline will provide clarity to city government that will bring transparency for our citizens, predictability for business people, and a cohesive plan of action that will drive the operations of a united city workforce toward a cogent vision. The policy strategies found herein will also pull from best practices found in cities around the country and around the world. These areas provide the framework for a platform that will usher in an era of innovation and vigor in city government.

While setting goals and defining strategies that will bring about the change our community so desperately needs, the links between these policy areas will also be clearly illustrated. Focused solutions and targeted actions in each area will be imperative to achieve significant results, but it is this holistic and integrated approach to governance that will bring about synergistic impacts and lasting change. Throughout this document you will find an emphasis on coordination within city government that gets departments and their personnel out of their traditional silos and into a more dynamic and creative atmosphere. This atmosphere will be the engine that creates efficiencies in the government and generates multi-disciplinary solutions to meet the complex problems our city faces.

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## ***Section One***

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT *and* JOB CREATION**

## ***Section Two***

**EDUCATION *and* YOUTH**

## ***Section Three***

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

## ***Section Four***

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, HOUSING *and*  
NEIGHBORHOODS**

## ***Section Five***

**SUSTAINABILITY *and* the ENVIRONMENT**

## ***Section Six***

**GOVERNMENT MODERNIZATION *and*  
EFFICIENCY**



**MINER**  
FOR MAYOR

## Section Six

# GOVERNMENT MODERNIZATION *and* EFFICIENCY

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**New York** State is an old government entity. With legally designated cities, towns and villages dating back hundreds of years many of the government structures we still hold now were first realized in those early days. Designations like city, town and village have meaning when it comes to taxation and municipal regulation and municipal service. But what else do they mean? Do these designations reflect today's realities? If we had to make our governments in New York State over again today, would we make them the same way?

These are the questions we need to be asking ourselves and each other as we face the tough fiscal and service related challenges ahead. We must put all that we know about government services here in Central New York under firm examination as we assess the benefits and problems that exist. We must strive to make our city government more effective and efficient while also keeping an eye towards how our region provides services across municipal boundaries.

We must take an innovative approach to service provision, always considering how new technology and new media can be employed for better services and communication with the public. New technology can aid us in our efforts to save money and provide better, more targeted services.

We must also strive to employ the most talented, qualified workforce to administer these innovative programs and services. We are fortunate to have world-class academic institutions, expert organized labor and incredibly dedicated, hard working individuals here in our city. We must tap into our incredible human resources to put the best expertise to work in our city government.

Steps must also be taken to push our data management and quality control systems as far as possible to maximize efficiency across

city departments. Syrastat can serve as an excellent base of data and process to make sure that we are making year to year improvements. This system must also set clear targets though and illustrate forecasting of projected demographics, revenues and required services to be more effective. This tool should also be used geographically to determine areas of greatest need across city functions in order to take our levels of service and efficiency to a new intensity.

Concurrently, these systems must also be transparent so the public can always be clear on what their government is doing and why it is doing it. It is important for the citizenry to understand the rationale that is being employed to make decisions with their tax dollars.

And even as we strive each day to make city operations more innovative, more efficient, more targeted, and more accessible we must also engage in the tough but important conversations about where we go from here as a region. True reform has been long deferred in this state. In order for us to meet the challenges that government is facing and will face in the coming years, we must think outside of the box and think critically about what is right for the future of this community.

We can no longer afford to just try to do the same old things a little bit better. It is time for us to fundamentally change how we do the people's business here in the City of Syracuse and explore the new ways that we might improve the quality of life for ourselves and for future generations of Syracusans.



**MINER**  
FOR MAYOR

## *Section Six*

# GOVERNMENT MODERNIZATION and EFFICIENCY

*(summary)*

### **GOALS**

- **Remake a City government that provides better services at higher efficiency.**
- **Pursue service sharing agreements with other local governments.**
- **Advance government modernization conversations in our community.**
- **Use technology to foster improved communication and participation in civic affairs.**

### **STRATEGY #45**

Provide personnel solutions that promote cross-departmental action and creates higher efficiency, greater effectiveness and maximizes overall public investment.

### **STRATEGY #46**

Develop a multi-media approach to communicating the goals, strategies, actions, progress, and public meetings and participation opportunities of the city government in order to create transparency and promote civic awareness and engagement.

### **STRATEGY #47**

Pursue the creation of an Airport Authority for Syracuse Hancock International Airport.

### **STRATEGY #48**

Create a city government structure that is logical for operational effectiveness, conducive to innovation and creativity, clear for citizens to understand and most efficient with our limited city resources.

### **STRATEGY #49**

Develop a fully integrated data management and mapping system that tracks and illustrates current service deployment and areas of need in order to more effectively and efficiently guide public services and investments.

### **STRATEGY #50**

Reach out to government leaders in Onondaga County and the Central New York region to explore new ideas for service sharing and government modernization.

## Section Six

# GOVERNMENT MODERNIZATION and EFFICIENCY

(cont'd.)

### GOALS

- **Remake a City government that provides better services at higher efficiency.**
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### STRATEGY #45

**Provide personnel solutions that promote cross-departmental action and creates higher efficiency, greater effectiveness and maximizes overall public investment.**

I believe that in order for city government to step into the 21st Century we need city staff that are able to think critically, plan and take action across departments. While we do have very talented people within each of the existing city departments, we are lacking the personnel to take this larger view. A view that could create exciting new programs, spur synergistic planning and project operations, and create greater efficiency and cost-effectiveness for our tax payers.

In order to achieve these goals I believe we need a more logical personnel structure that incorporates a planning office and

other top level personnel that can spearhead major projects and fast track important initiatives. This city staff must fit within a logical government structure that is easy for citizens as well as those within the government to understand, but it is important that we have dynamic employees that can create the kind of synergy and coordination that a 21st Century government needs to find greater success.

### STRATEGY #46

**Develop a multi-media approach to communicating the goals, strategies, actions, progress, and public meetings and participation opportunities of the city government in order to create transparency and promote civic awareness and engagement.**

The City's Syrastat program has played a very important role in how city services are deployed throughout our many neighborhoods over the last eight years. This program has placed an emphasis on operational awareness and year to year data tracking. However, this program often lacks the kind of goal-setting and transparency that would enhance citizen awareness and engagement.

I believe tax payers have a right to know what their government is doing and what the rationale is for action. As Mayor I would put further power to our data management and quality control systems by setting clear goals and targets for services, and clearly articulating our goals, actions, measures and outcomes to the public. The City's website could be the perfect venue for this kind of communication. This kind of open and



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## Section Six

# GOVERNMENT MODERNIZATION and EFFICIENCY

(cont'd.)

transparent operation is not only good government, it also has the potential to generate intense public interest and engagement in the democratic process. Greater participation and buy-in from our citizens will only further empower our community to turn the page to a brighter future for the City of Syracuse.

### **STRATEGY #47**

#### **Pursue the creation of an Airport Authority for Syracuse Hancock International Airport.**

Our airport is one of our most important community gateways. For many visitors to our great city the airport is the first thing they see and the first place they experience. First impressions are important. We must make sure that Hancock International Airport has the facilities and amenities that showcase the beauty, hospitality and vitality of our city and our region.

The creation of an airport authority will offer a model for financing that will free up the City's ability to bond for other projects while adequate financing of the airport facilities themselves will not be dependent on the City's ability to issue bonds. As we are constitutionally limited in our ability to issue bonds, it is important that the airport receives the kind of upgrades and maintenance that is required to have a first-rate facility. As we face even tougher financial challenges ahead, it will be important for us to use creative strategies like this to solve difficult problems with financing and quality service.

### **STRATEGY #48**

**Create a city government structure that is logical for operational effectiveness, conducive to innovation and creativity, clear for citizens to understand and most efficient with our limited city resources.**

For decades we have heard about how organizations in government and business need to break out of their traditional silos in order to achieve a higher level of success. Still, we deal with the same silos today in city government. Currently the City's operating departments are somewhat arbitrarily placed under a different Director with little regard for how the operations of one department under the purview of Administration might be critically linked to the operations of another department under Operations. While a certain amount of communication does regularly take place between Commissioners, each department seems to identify as its own organization unto itself rather than as part of one larger united organization – the city government.

This mindset is incredibly detrimental to achieving fully coordinated public services that yield better outcomes and synergistic results that save money. Relatively minor changes to the current structure can be made to significantly increase efficiency and promote a more logical and easy to understand arrangement. Structural and personnel changes can be made reasonably quickly and can help us make a more streamlined and creative city government.

### **STRATEGY #49**

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# GOVERNMENT MODERNIZATION and EFFICIENCY

(cont'd.)

Compiling data regarding service needs and service provision is incredibly important. Budgeting and operational decisions are often based on such data. However, without a comprehensive and graphically detailed mapping component to our data management systems, how are we to truly know if we are providing services in the most effective and efficient possible ways?

The City's Syrastat data management and quality control system must be linked to a Geographic Information System (GIS) tool that can overlay myriad indicators that can better aid us in making decisions about service deployment across all departments. We need to be able to more fully understand the connections between housing issues, code information, schools, social service needs, proximity to parks and open space, police force deployment, location of structure fires and countless other indicators. Without a geographic representation of these factors it is very difficult to equitably and effectively provide public services without wasting finite resources.

### STRATEGY #50

**Reach out to government leaders in Onondaga County and the Central New York region to explore new ideas for service sharing and government modernization.**

While it is a fundamental responsibility to improve how our city government functions for the people of Syracuse, and a responsibility as Mayor that I will not take lightly, it will also be important to explore how Central New York can achieve better outcomes through new models of governance.

Every point in my plan as Mayor is in keeping with a vision for our city. That vision is one of opportunity, vitality and self-actualization for our community. I am committed to passionately pursuing that vision. What we must ask ourselves as we move forward

is, how are the next critical opportunities going to be presented in our community? How will that vitality spread through our community and how is our community defined? And who is able to achieve that self-actualization? We must rethink our ideas of community.

As Mayor I intend to reach out to other leaders here in Central New York to discuss their visions for success as well as mine. I believe we can find much common ground that can serve as a basis for future success. Through this communication and desire to improve the quality of life I believe that we as a city and as a region can reach a brighter future for Syracuse and Central New York.





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